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(54) **WIRELESS CHAT AUTOMATIC STATUS TRACKING**

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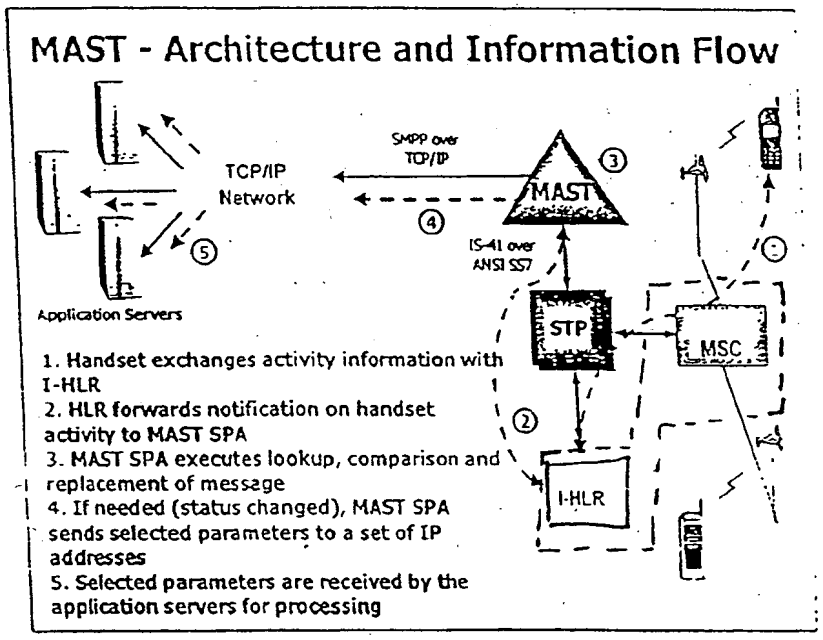
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**[7] **H04Q 7/20**

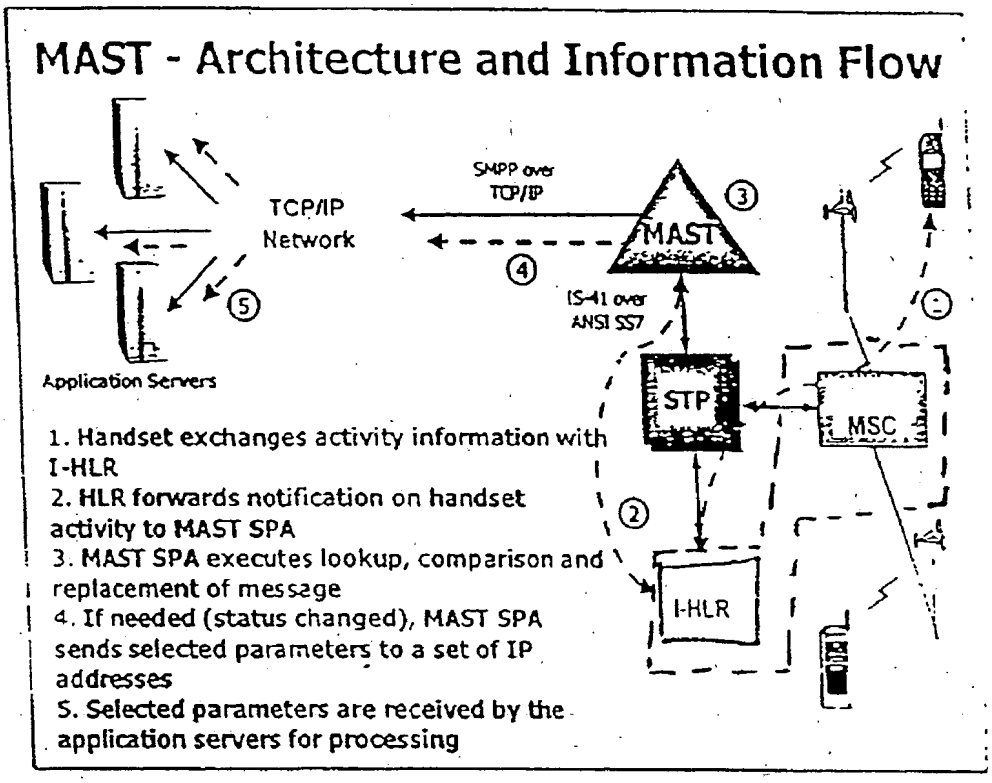
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **455/456**; 455/466; 455/435

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A technique and apparatus to provide status tracking of presence and/or location of a mobile, wireless device to a requesting entity even outside of a particular wireless system. This allows wireless service providers the ability to monitor and log changes in the status of mobile stations within and/or outside their networks. Embodiments are disclosed wherein presence and/or location information is provided to entities outside of a particular servicing wireless network using the mechanisms of call processing components of a mobile network (e.g., call setup procedures), and using standard mechanisms currently available to any appropriately conforming Mobile Switching Center (MSC) element. In one disclosed embodiment, a wireless chat tracking system is implemented which utilizes a change in mobile registration status to automatically notify a chat group system outside the wireless network of current status information activity regarding a relevant device, e.g., registration activity or inactivity timeout. In the wireless chat automatic status tracking system, a registration notification (REGNOT) message is either explicitly forwarded or copied to an external IP based application (e.g., to a mobile chat group system). The change in mobile registration is communicated via a suitable signaling link (e.g., SS7, TCP/IP, etc.) between a Home Location Register (HLR) and the chat group system. Therefore, instead of a conventionally closed system using SS7 messages, REGNOT messages are pushed out over TCP/IP connections to external applications (e.g., chat servers) to automatically notify the external system of the location of a particular user.



MAST Architecture and Information Flow



MAST Architecture and Information Flow

FIG. 1

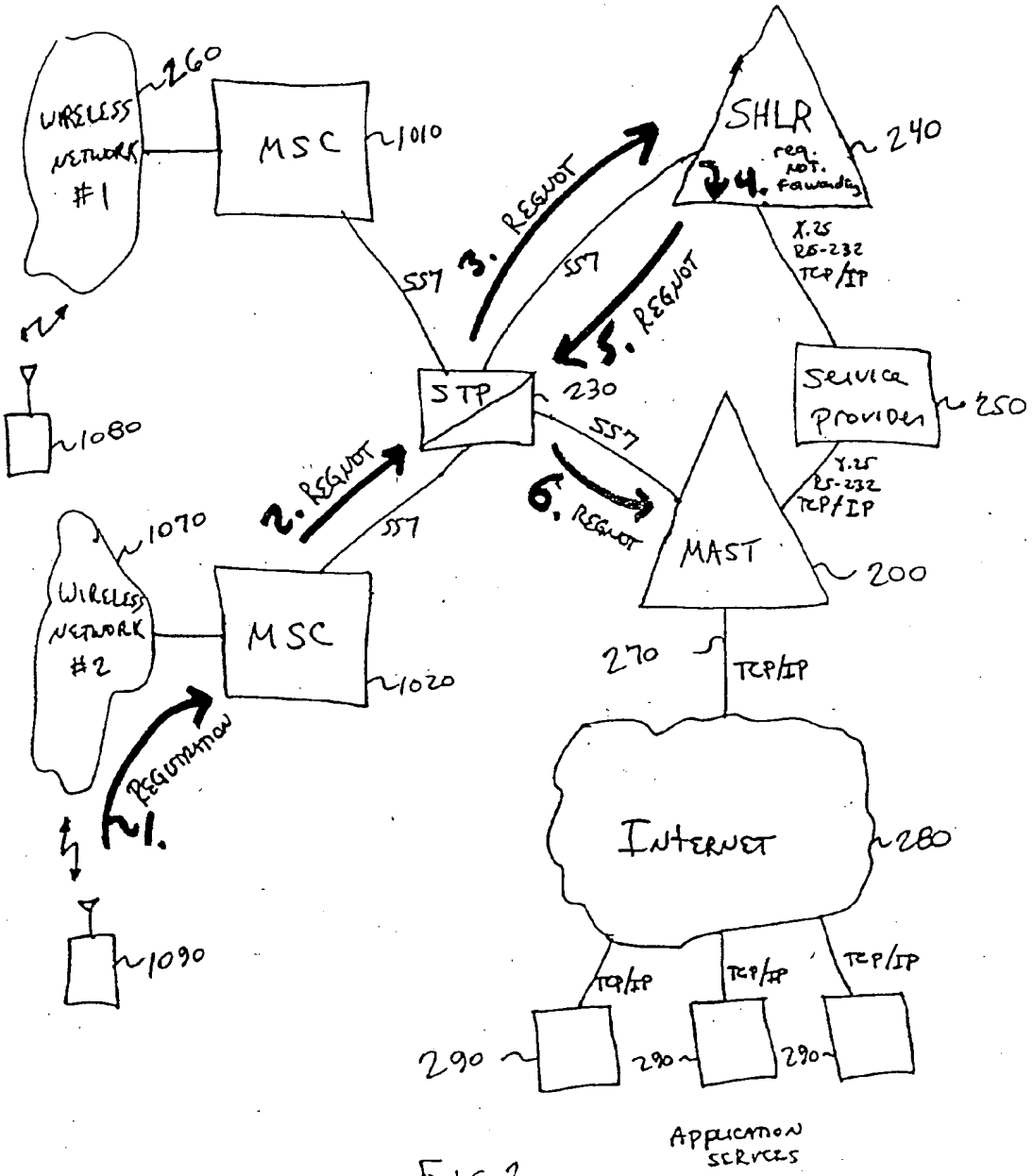

WIRELESS NETWORK #1
260
MSC
1010
SHLR
240
req. not. forwarding
4.
X.25 RS-232 TCP/IP
SS7
3. REGNOT
SS7
5. REGNOT
STP
230
Service Provider
250
1080
2. REGNOT
SS7
SS7
6. REGNOT
X.25 RS-232 TCP/IP
1070
WIRELESS NETWORK #2
MSC
1020
MAST
200
270
TCP/IP
REGISTRATION
1.
INTERNET
280
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
290
290
290
1090
APPLICATION SERVERS

FIG. 2

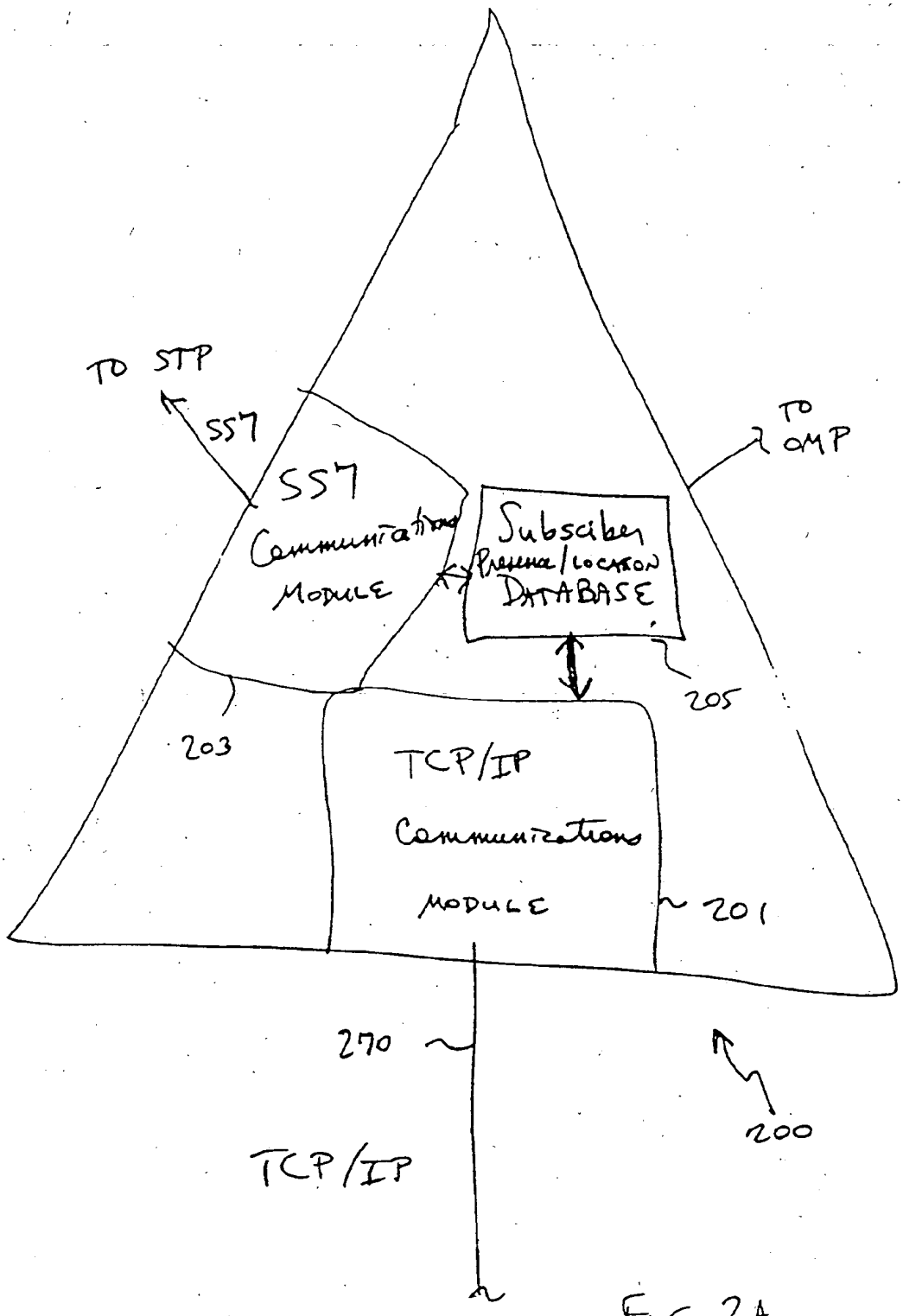

TO STP
SS7
SS7 Communications Module
Subscriber Presence/Location DATABASE
TO OMP
205
203
TCP/IP Communications Module
201
270
200
TCP/IP

FIG. 2A

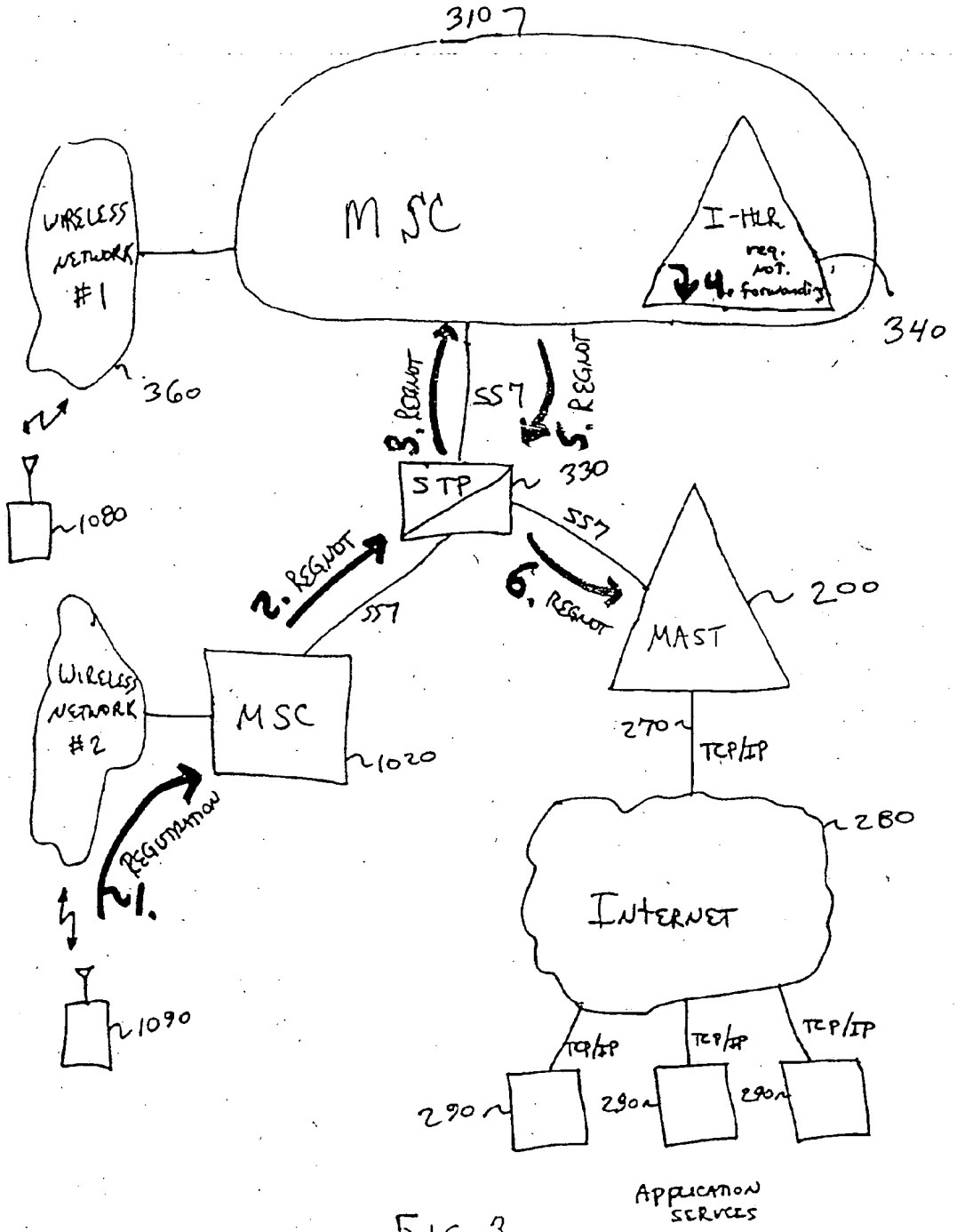

3107
MSC
I-HLR
req. not. forwarding
4.
340
WIRELESS NETWORK #1
360
1080
3. REGNOT
SS7
5. REGNOT
STP
330
2. REGNOT
SS7
6. REGNOT
MAST
200
WIRELESS NETWORK #2
MSC
1020
SS7
270
TCP/IP
REGISTRATION
1.
1090
INTERNET
280
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
290
290
290
APPLICATION SERVICES

FIG. 3

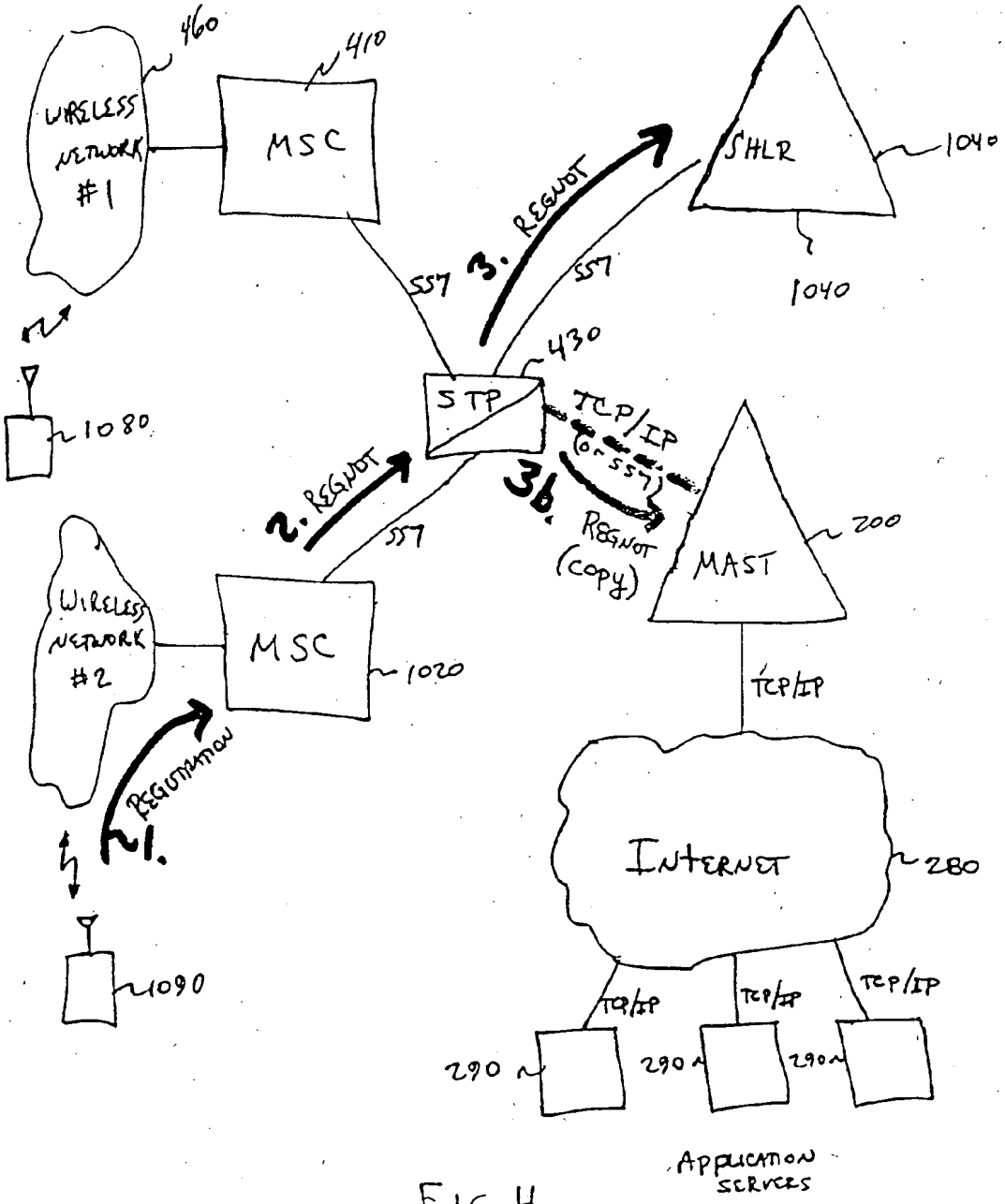

460
410
WIRELESS NETWORK #1
MSC
SHLR
1040
1040
SS7
3. REGNOT
SS7
430
STP
TCP/IP (or SS7)
1080
2. REGNOT
3b. REGNOT (copy)
MAST
200
SS7
WIRELESS NETWORK #2
MSC
1020
TCP/IP
REGISTRATION
1.
INTERNET
280
1090
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
TCP/IP
290
290
290
APPLICATION SERVERS

FIG. 4

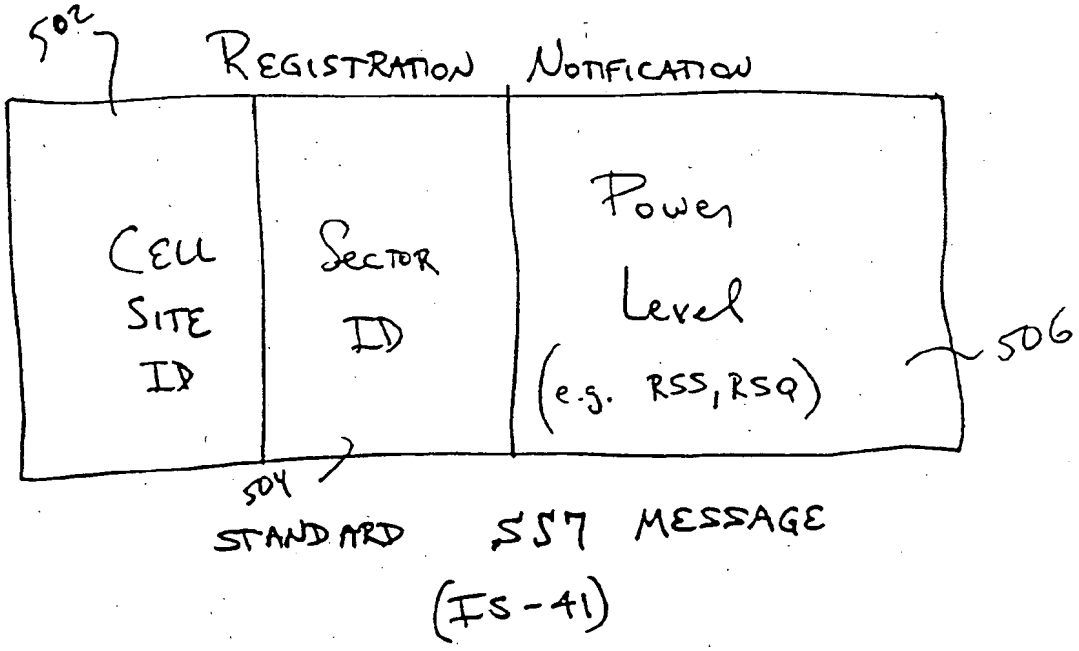

502
REGISTRATION NOTIFICATION
CELL SITE ID
SECTOR ID
POWER LEVEL (e.g. RSS, RSQ)
506
504
STANDARD 557 MESSAGE
(IS-41)

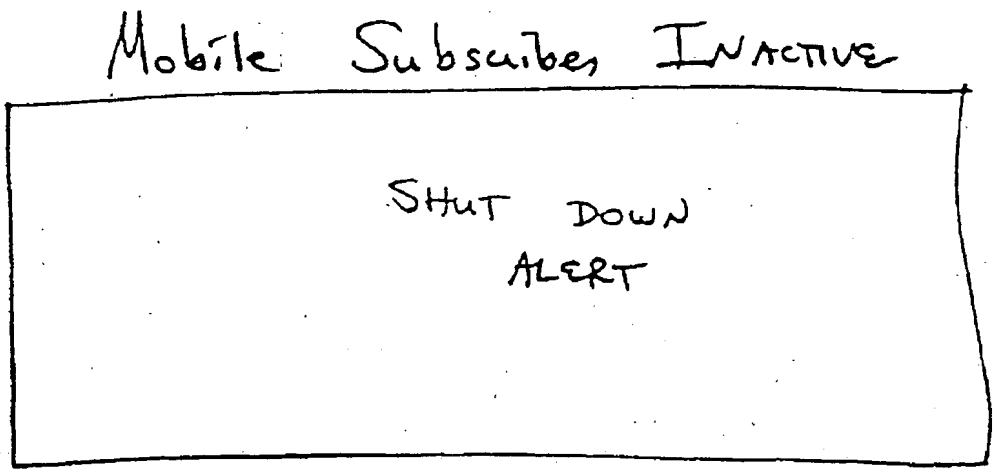
FIG. 5A

RegistrationNotification INVOKE Parameters	
Field	Value
Identifier	SET (NATIONAL 16)
Length	variable octets
Contents	
ElectronicSerialNumber	
MobileIdentificationNumber	
MSCID (Serving MSC)	
QualificationInformationCode	
SystemMyTypeCode (Serving MSC or VLR)	
AvailabilityType	
BorderCellAccess	
ControlChannelData	
ExtendedMSCID (VLR)	
LocationAreaID	
PC_SSN (Serving MSC or VLR)	
ReceivedSignalQuality	
ReportType	
SenderIdentificationNumber	
SMS_Address	
SMS_MessageWaitingIndicator	
SystemAccessData	
SystemAccessType	
SystemCapabilities	
TerminalType	
TransactionCapability	

RegistrationNotification INVOKE Parameters

PRIOR ART

FIG. 5B



STANDARD SS7 MESSAGE
(IS-41)

FIG. 6

MSInactive

This operation was named CSSInactive prior to this revision of the Interim Standard.

The MSInactive operation is used to indicate that an MS is inactive. The MSInactive operation is also used by the Serving VLR to notify the HLR of the cancellation of an MS's registration. The MSInactive operation is used by the HLR to provide the MS's CallHistoryCount to the AC when the SSD is shared with the VLR, and the VLR cancels the MS's registration.

The MSInactive operation is initiated with a TCAP INVOKE (LAST). This is carried by a TCAP QUERY WITH PERMISSION package. The Parameter Set is encoded as follows:

Table 66 MSInactive INVOKE Parameters

MSInactive INVOKE Parameters				Timer: MSIT
Field	Value	Type	Reference	Notes
Identifier	SET [NATIONAL 18]	M	6.3.2.1	
Length	variable octets	M	6.3.2.1	
Contents				
ElectronicSerialNumber		M	6.5.2.63	
MobileIdentificationNumber		M	6.5.2.81	
CallHistoryCount		O	6.5.2.18	a
DeregistrationType		O	6.5.2.55	b
LocationAreaID		O	6.5.2.77	c
SenderIdentificationNumber		O	6.5.2.116	d
SMS_MessageWaitingIndicator		O	6.5.2.129	e

Notes:

a. Include if MS registration is canceled and if the SSD is shared.

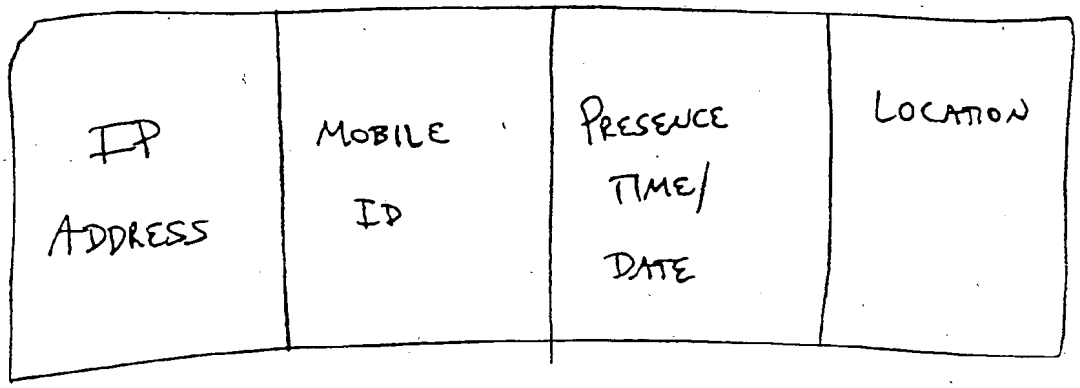
b. Include from VLR to HLR and HLR to AC for MS deregistration.

c. May be included from MSC-V to VLR. Usage in the HLR is not defined.

d. Include to identify the functional entity sending this message.

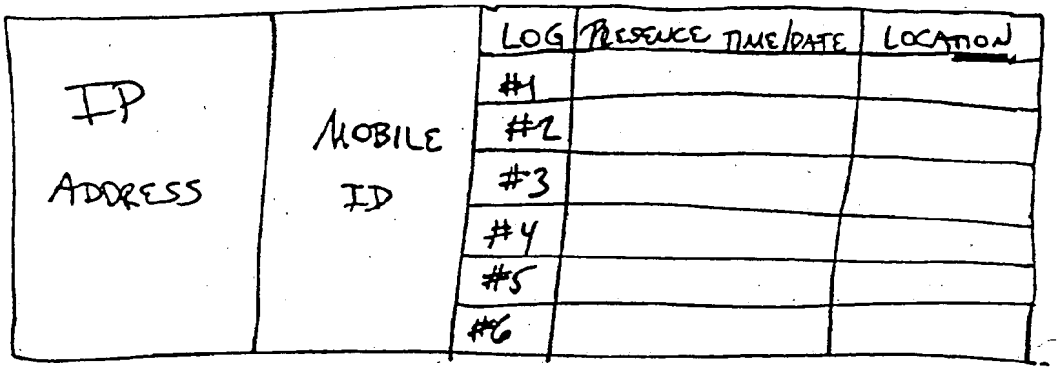
e. Include to indicate that an SMS message is pending delivery.

FIG. 6B



IP MESSAGE TO APPLICATION SERVER (e.g., to Chat Server)

FIG. 7A



IP MESSAGE TO APPLICATION SERVER

FIG. 7B

SAMPLE OF TABLE

MSID	ACTIVE Y/N	LAST DATE/TIME	PARAMETER 1	PARAMETER 2	PARAMETER 3
COMPARE FIELD	Y	N	Y	N	Y
SEND FIELD	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
9083067462	Y	120314520000	XX	YY	ZZ

FIG. 8

SAMPLE DECISION TREE

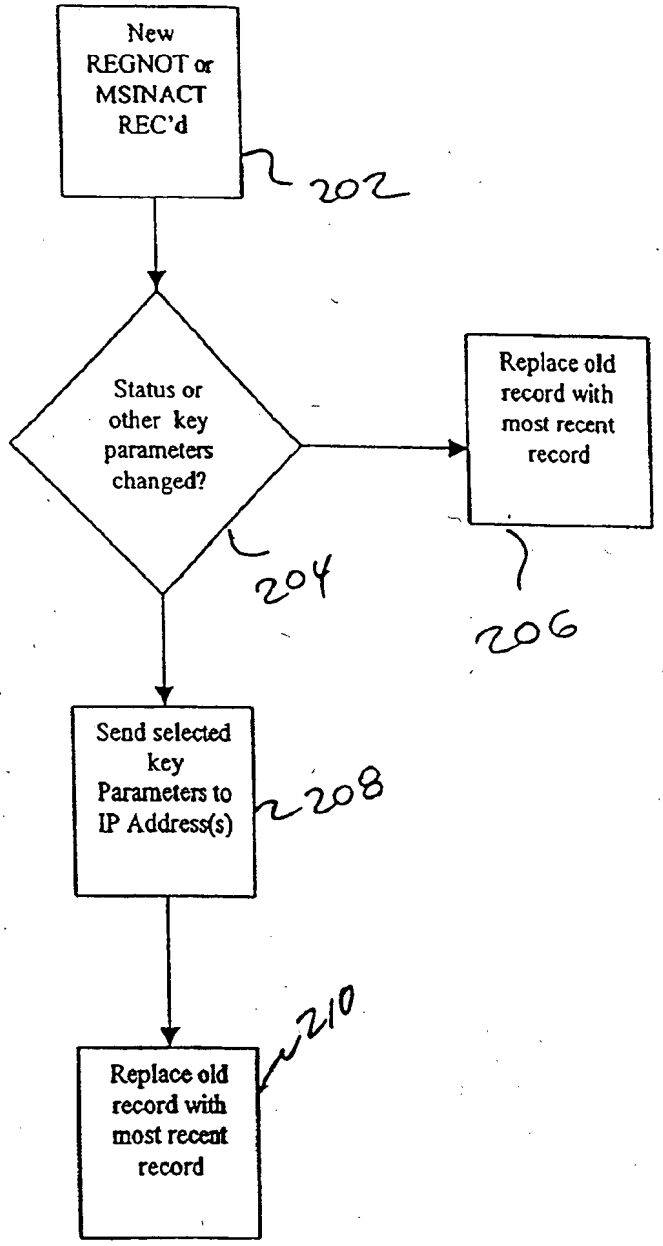


FIG. 9

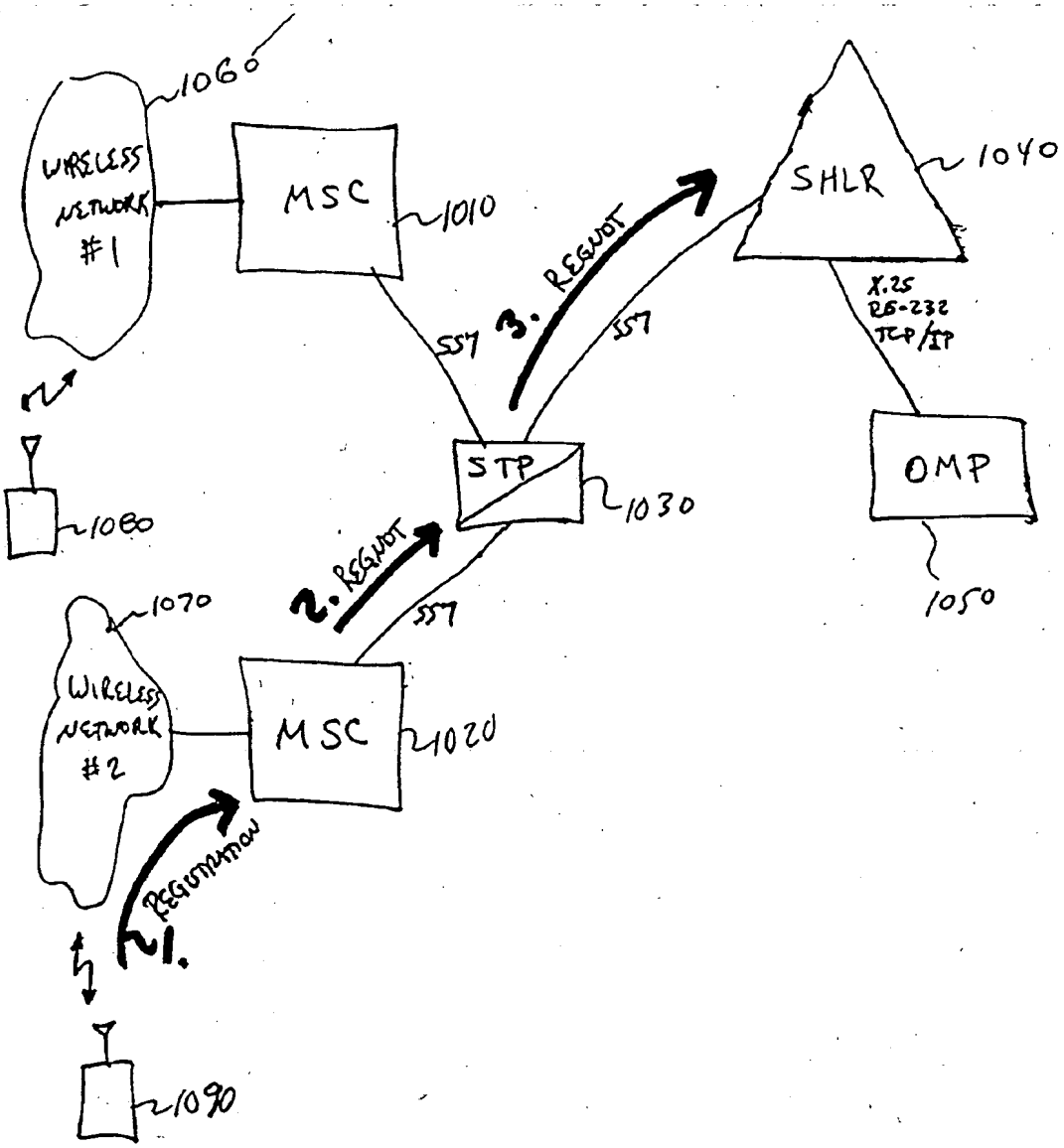

1060
WIRELESS NETWORK #1
MSC
1010
SHLR
1040
SS7
3. REGNOT
SS7
X.25
RS-232
TCP/IP
STP
1030
OMP
1050
1080
2. REGNOT
SS7
1070
WIRELESS NETWORK #2
MSC
1020
REGISTRATION
1.
1090

FIG. 10

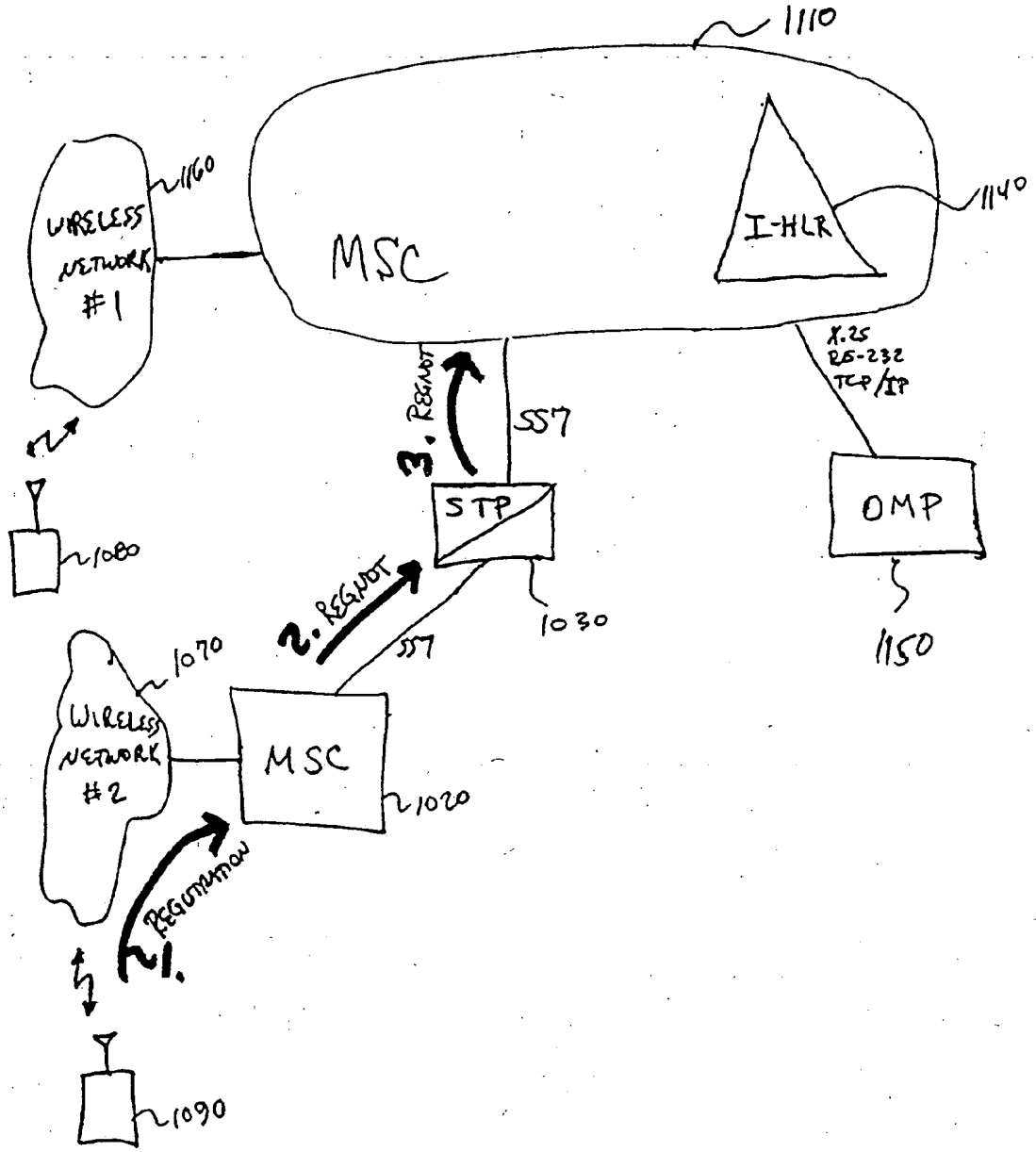

1110
WIRELESS NETWORK #1
1160
MSC
I-HLR
1140
X.25
RS-232
TCP/IP
3. REGNOT
SS7
STP
OMP
1080
2. REGNOT
1030
1150
1070
WIRELESS NETWORK #2
SS7
MSC
1020
REGISTRATION
1.
1090

FIG. 11

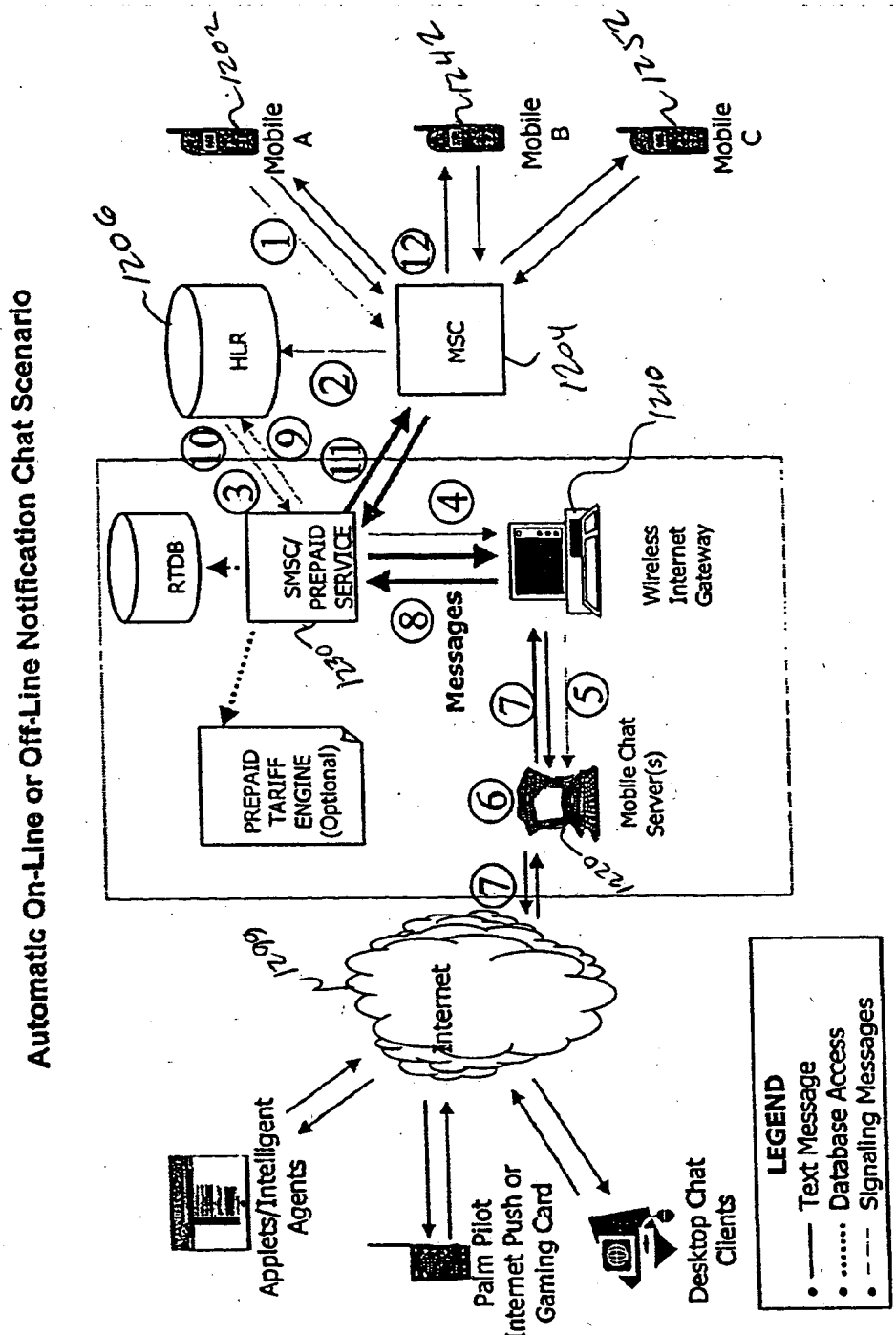

Automatic On-Line or Off-Line Notification Chat Scenario
Mobile A
Mobile B
Mobile C
HLR
MSC
RTDB
SMSC/ PREPAID SERVICE
Wireless Internet Gateway
Messages
PREPAID TARIFF ENGINE (Optional)
Mobile Chat Server(s)
Internet
Applets/Intelligent Agents
Palm Pilot Internet Push or Gaming Card
Desktop Chat Clients
LEGEND
Text Message
Database Access
Signaling Messages

Fig. 12

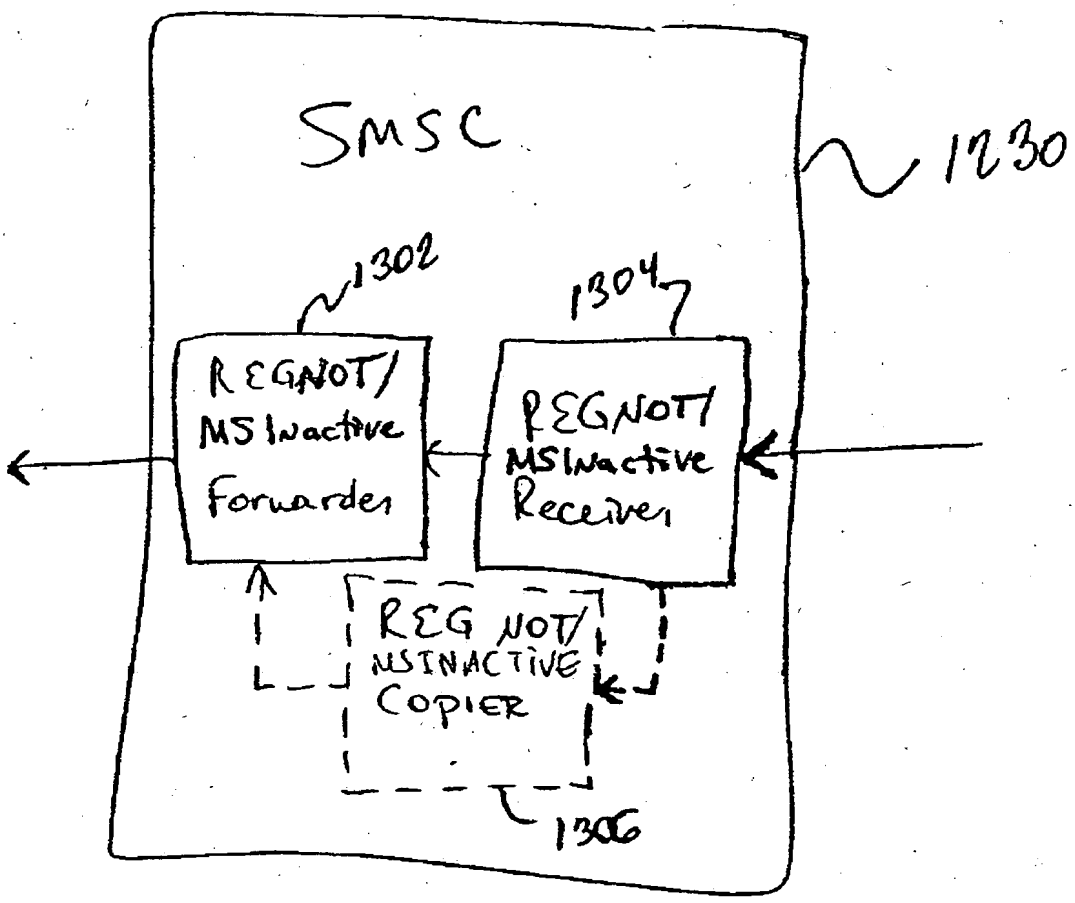

SMSC
1230
1302
1304
REGNOT/
MSInactive
Forwarder
REGNOT/
MSInactive
Receiver
REG NOT/
MSINACTIVE
COPIER
1306

FIG. 13

WIRELESS CHAT AUTOMATIC STATUS TRACKING

[0001] This application is related to and claims priority from co-pending U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/196,104, entitled "Mobile Activity Status Tracker" to Wallace et al., filed on Apr. 11, 2000; from co-pending U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/196,099, entitled "Wireless Chat Status Tracking" to Ung et al., filed on Apr. 11, 2000; and from co-pending U.S. application Ser. No. 09/576,022, entitled "Mobile Activity Status Tracker" to Wallace et al., filed on May 23, 2000, the entirety of all three of which are expressly incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention relates generally to wireless carriers, Internet service providers (ISPs), information content delivery services/providers, portal sites for mobile-terminated hosting of chat groups, and/or Internet chat session hosts. More particularly, it relates to the gateway perspective of mobile device functions such as ANSI-41 automatic registration, real-time Internet message billing, real-time wireless message billing, messaging in general, wireless chat, and/or Internet chat.

[0004] 2. Background of Related Art

[0005] The present invention relates to improvements to mobile wireless systems, which currently include mobility management, IS-41 mobility management, and/or registration systems, to support, e.g., Internet chat, ICQ, etc.

[0006] Up to this point, in a Wireless & Internet chat group system, a chat member must manually notify the system when he/she desires to go on-line or off-line. This invention enables a wireless carrier and/or Internet service provider to introduce a Wireless Intelligent Network (WIN) service that allows a chat room or session system to be automatically notified when the subscriber is on-line or off-line. This will allow, for example, the chat system to continually and automatically notify the subscribers of the chat group or a "buddy list" about a participant's status in a chat room/session at any time. This WIN service will be applicable to both prepaid and postpaid IS-41 networks.

[0007] Currently no system is known to provide such WIN service for wireless devices. Existing systems allow the landline internet subscriber to automatically notify the chat group when the subscriber goes on-line or off-line.

[0008] Existing technologies have not addressed the concept of automatic notification for wireless chat participants. Without this feature, members in the chat group are not aware of the member's actual status. The wireless participants have to remember to notify the chat group or buddies of his/her availability.

[0009] As is known, presence information and location information regarding a particular wireless device is recorded in a Home Location Register for the relevant wireless network.

[0010] **FIG. 10** shows a conventional stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) architecture and message flow of a Mobile Registration Notification message (REGNOT).

[0011] In **FIG. 10**, a first wireless network **1060** includes a mobile switching center MSC **1010** and a stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) **1040**. The SHLR **1040** and the MSC **1010** communicate over the cellular telephony network (and perhaps the PSTN when calls are connected to a land-line switch or calls need to be delivered via a trunk line that routes through a PSTN) via one or more switching transfer points (STPs) **1030**. The protocol used for communication is IS-41 or GSM-MAP over signaling system No. 7 (SS7).

[0012] The service provider is typically given maintenance and configuration proprietary access to the database stored in the SHLR using an Operations and Maintenance Processor (OMP) and provisioning terminal console **1050**, which may communicate with the SHLR using a point-to-point link, e.g., an X.25 link, an RS-232 link, or a TCP/IP link. Communications from the OMP **1050** typically relate to maintenance and configuration only, and do not relate to operational functions of the relevant wireless network.

[0013] A second wireless network **1070** servicing another wireless device **1090** includes another MSC **1020**, and utilizes one or more STPs **1030** in the SS7network.

[0014] In the given scenario, assume that the wireless device **1090** in communication with the second wireless network **1070** is serviced by the service provider of the first wireless network **1060**. Thus, presence and location information regarding the second wireless device **1090** is stored and updated in the SHLR **1040** corresponding to its servicing network.

[0015] To communicate presence and location information to the 'home' register of the second wireless device **1090**, a MOBILE REGISTRATION message (1.) is sent in accordance with Signaling System #7 (SS7) standards using IS-41C protocol messages through the second wireless network **1070** to the MSC **1020** of the second wireless network **1070**. The 'presence' of a wireless device relates to the wireless device being powered ON and reachable in the relevant wireless network.

[0016] The MSC **1020** forwards the MOBILE REGISTRATION message (1.) upon receipt to the STP **1030** as an IS-41 REGISTRATION NOTIFICATION (REGNOT) message (2.).

[0017] The STP **1030** forwards the REGNOT message (3.) to the appropriate SHLR **1040** servicing that particular wireless device **1090**.

[0018] In this way, the Home Location Register of a particular wireless device **1040** is provided with presence and location information regarding the whereabouts and registration activity of a particular subscriber (e.g., wireless device **1090**).

[0019] **FIG. 10** relates to a Home Location Register which is installed as a separate network element. Using a SHLR **1040** as shown in **FIG. 10**, the SHLR **1040** must communicate with the associated MSC **1010** using SS7 signaling through the STP **1030**. Presence and location information is updated in a subscriber's Home Location Register in a similar manner when the Home Location Register is integrated onto a common platform with the MSC element. This configuration is known as an integrated Home Location Register (I-HLR).

[0020] FIG. 11 shows a conventional integrated Home Location Register (I-HLR) architecture and message flow of a Mobile Registration Notification message (REGNOT) allowing proprietary communications between elements such as the MSC and I-HLR operating on a common platform.

[0021] In particular, as shown in FIG. 11, a MOBILE REGISTRATION message (1.) is sent to the MSC 1020 providing access to the roaming wireless device 1090, and the MSC 1020 forwards the REGNOT message (2.) to the relevant STPs 1030 as shown in FIG. 10. However, instead of forwarding the REGNOT message (3.) to the SHLR 1040 as shown in FIG. 10, the REGNOT message (3.) in FIG. 11 is forwarded to the common platform including both the MSC 1110 and the I-HLR 1140. The MSC 1110 and I-HLR 1140 may communicate with one another using any desired proprietary communications protocol, without need to conform to the SS7signaling protocol at that point. Nevertheless, the I-HLR 1140 is updated with presence and location information regarding the roaming wireless device 1090.

[0022] In the conventional scenario, presence and location information is restricted to use by the 'home' service provider of a particular wireless device. Using conventional signaling protocols, other wireless networks are not provided with presence and location information regarding wireless devices other than those which subscribe to its services. The presence and location information is conventional used only by the home service provider for routing of call information (e.g., establishing a voice connection to a mobile wireless device).

[0023] Accordingly, there is a need for providing presence and location information to entities other than just those servicing a particular wireless device, thus enabling a new host of network services and applications.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0024] In accordance with the principles of the present invention, in a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a REGNOT and/or MSInactive handler comprises a registration notification and/or an MS inactivity messages receiver, and a registration/inactive message forwarder to forward a registration notification and/or MS inactivity message received by a mobile switching center over an Internet connection.

[0025] A method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant in accordance with another aspect of the present invention comprises receiving an IS-41 conforming registration notification and MS inactive messages from one of a mobile telephony network, mobile switching center, I-HLR, and S-HLR or STP, and automatically forwarding the IS-41 conforming registration notification and MS inactive messages over an Internet connection to an external chat server.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0026] Features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following description with reference to the drawings. Note that for simplicity of explanation, only a REGNOT message is shown in the figures. However, an MS inactivity (MSInactive) message may be conveyed in the same way as as the REGNOT message. In the drawings:

[0027] FIG. 1 shows an exemplary architecture and information flow of a mobile activity status tracker (MAST) system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0028] FIG. 2 is a more detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system corresponding to a stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) including a registration notification forwarding mechanism utilizing message flows in conformance with SS7 standards and IS-41 standards, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0029] FIG. 2A shows a block diagram of the basic elements of an exemplary MAST system shown in FIG. 2.

[0030] FIG. 3 is a detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system corresponding to an integrated Home Location Register (I-HLR) including a registration notification forwarding mechanism integrated with a mobile switching center (MSC) on a common platform, utilizing message flows in conformance with SS7 standards and IS-41 standards, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0031] FIG. 4 is a detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system corresponding to a stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) including a Registration Notification copy function in a signaling transfer point (STP) and a TCP/IP connection (or SS7 connection) to the MAST application, particularly useful in wireless networks having HLRs which do not include a registration notification forwarding mechanism, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0032] FIG. 5A is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters of a Mobile Registration Notification (REGNOT) message in conformance with SS7 and IS-41 standards utilized for determination of location information in a MAST system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0033] FIG. 5B is a detailed depiction of all conventional parameters of a REGNOT message.

[0034] FIG. 6 is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters of a Mobile Subscriber Inactive message in conformance with SS7 and IS-41 standards utilized for determination of inactive presence information in a MAST system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0035] FIG. 6B is a detailed description of the otherwise conventional MSInactive message parameters.

[0036] FIG. 7A is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters such as location in an exemplary Internet Protocol (IP) message sent from the MAST system to an application server (e.g., a Chat Server) via the Internet, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0037] FIG. 7B is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters in another exemplary IP message such as a log of past presence and location information for a particular wireless device sent from the MAST system to an applica-

tion server (e.g., a law enforcement authority) via the Internet, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0038] **FIG. 8** shows an exemplary Mobile Station Identity (MSID) ordered table, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0039] **FIG. 9** shows an exemplary process by which the parsed message portions are processed.

[0040] **FIG. 10** shows a conventional stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) architecture and message flow of a Mobile Registration Notification message (REGNOT).

[0041] **FIG. 11** shows a conventional integrated Home Location Register (I-HLR) architecture and message flow of a Mobile Registration Notification message (REGNOT) allowing proprietary communications between elements such as the MSC and I-HLR operating on a common platform.

[0042] **FIG. 12** shows an exemplary service implementation showing wireless chat status tracking providing an automatic on-line or off-line notification in a chat scenario using techniques and apparatus in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0043] **FIG. 13** shows a block diagram of the SMSC shown in **FIG. 12**, including a REGNOT/MSInactive message receiver, a REGNOT/MSInactive forwarder, and an optional REGNOT/MSInactive copier, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

[0044] The present invention relates to a technique and apparatus to provide status tracking of presence and/or location of a mobile, wireless device to a requesting entity even outside of a particular wireless system. This allows wireless service providers the ability to monitor and log changes in the status of mobile stations within and/or outside their networks enabling the development of multiple applications and network services. Embodiments are disclosed wherein presence and/or location information is provided to entities outside of a particular servicing wireless network using the mechanisms of call processing components of a mobile network (e.g., call setup procedures), and using standard mechanisms currently available to any appropriately conforming Mobile Switching Center (MSC) element. An embodiment implementing a wireless chat automatic status tracking system and method is also disclosed.

[0045] Mobile presence and location are key concepts for location-based services and applications which require knowledge of mobile station/subscriber availability. Currently, conventional systems do not provide such wireless intelligent network (WIN) service for wireless devices.

[0046] It is important to note that existing systems and techniques have been conventionally located outside of a wireless network. As such, the existing systems have not been privy to, nor had the need to be privy to, triggers needed to obtain true mobile presence or location information.

Mobile Activity Status Tracker (MAST)

[0047] One series of disclosed embodiments relate to a software application package which tracks and reports status and activity of mobile wireless devices in a wireless network using mobile registration message, inactivity message forwarding, and/or mobile automatic notification of subscriber status to TCP/IP entities. This embodiment of a mobile activity status tracker is referred to herein as a Mobile Activity Status Tracker (MAST).

[0048] In accordance with the principles of the present invention, status changes that are recorded are sent via TCP/IP communications to other service provider-specific applications. The MAST system duplicates the same or similar information of a corresponding HLR, but is available as an external database entity which functions and communications are not restricted by SS7 standards.

[0049] Tracking in accordance with the principles of the present invention utilizes registration/de-registration activity of mobile stations. Utilizing status changes for a particular mobile station, key events can be noted regarding presence and/or location of the particular mobile station.

[0050] The MAST application offers entities (e.g., Internet and others) outside of a wireless infrastructure the ability to receive presence and/or location information regarding a particular mobile station to network entities outside of that which is servicing a particular wireless device. As disclosed, the MAST application has the ability to pull presence and/or location information or to push presence and/or location information to a requesting entity as desired.

[0051] Certain capabilities such as registration notification forwarding mechanisms/Registration Notification Forward Message and SMPP client which are basic to this application, are described in detail in two pending U.S. Applications by the same Assignee as the present case. In particular, an exemplary SMSC is described in co-pending and co-owned U.S. appl. Ser. No. 09/322,929, entitled "Short Message Service Notification Between Multiple Short Message Service Centers", filed Jun. 1, 1999, by Timothy J. Lorello and Reuben D. Hart, the entirety of which is explicitly incorporated herein by reference. Moreover, an exemplary Prepaid functionality and architecture is described in co-pending and co-owned U.S. appl. Ser. No. 09/533,805, entitled "Prepaid Call Management In Intelligent Network", filed Mar. 23, 2000, by Elizabeth Countryman, Timothy J. Lorello, Mark Titus, and Dara Ung, the entirety of which is explicitly incorporated herein by reference.

[0052] The Mobile Activity Status Tracker (MAST) is a Service Package Application (SPA) that allows wireless service providers to monitor and log changes in the status of mobile stations within their networks. The status changes that are recorded are sent via TCP/IP to other servers for service provider-specific applications. The tracking involves the registration/de-registration activity and location of the mobile stations. The tracking need not track call-specific information, e.g., called telephone numbers or information regarding conversations sustained by the tracked wireless subscribers.

[0053] Some disclosed embodiments relate to the use of a Home Location Register (HLR) which is integrated with a Mobile Switching Center (MSC) on a common platform, referred to herein as Integrated Home Location Registers (I-HLRs) commercially available from LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES INC. in Murray Hill, N.J. Other embodiments relate to the use of a stand-alone HLR separate from the

MSC platform, referred to herein as Stand alone HLR's (S-HLR). All types of HLRs are collectively referred to herein as an HLR.

[0054] The disclosed MAST SPA is implemented on an Advantage Service Control Point (SCP) Wireless Intelligent Network Platform, commercially available from LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES INC. The SCP provides the required ANSI SS7 and TCP/IP protocol support and Service Circuit Handlers (SCH) for the MAST SPA.

[0055] In accordance with the principles of the present invention, the MAST SPA receives mobile activity notifications from an HLR, and forwards selected parameters upon request or configuration to servers external to the wireless network over a TCP/IP communication link (e.g., over the Internet or over an Intranet).

[0056] **FIG. 1** shows an exemplary architecture and information flow of a mobile activity status tracker (MAST) system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0057] In particular, as shown in **FIG. 1**, the operation of the exemplary MAST SPA includes the following exemplary steps:

[0058] (1) The handset exchanges activity information with the I-HLR, which in turn sends the Mobile Station Identity (MSID) of the mobile station and a set of relevant parameters to the MAST SPA in a registration notification forwarding mechanism message.

[0059] (2) The MAST SPA creates a temporary record for that mobile handset based on the MSID. The MAST performs a lookup in a database of existing records, using the MSID as a key. If there is no record for the MSID, then the temporary record is stored in the database. If there is a record for the same MSID, the MAST compares the temporary record with that found in the database to determine any changes in the activity status of the mobile station (or any other relevant parameters). If the activity status is the same (i.e., unchanged), the MAST overwrites the old record with the new one. On the other hand, if the activity status has changed, the activity status of the relevant mobile wireless device will be Notified or Forwarded to one or more application servers having access to the Internet using an appropriate TCP/IP interface and appropriate IP addresses (or other suitable protocol and communication path, e.g., SS7). To this end, the MAST SPA will forward a set of selected parameters (e.g., a subset of the parameters available in the temporary record) to one or more requesting or pre-configured applications servers using corresponding Internet Protocol (IP) addresses. The MAST then replaces the existing, older record with the new, updated record.

[0060] Preferably, the MAST resides on an SCP and accepts copies of IS-41 Registration Notification and MSInactive messages from the HLR(s).

[0061] **FIG. 2** is a more detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system **200** corresponding to a stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) **240** including a registration notification forwarding mechanism utilizing message flows in conformance with SS7 standards and IS-41 standards, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0062] In particular, **FIG. 2** shows a MAST system **200** implemented by a particular service provider corresponding to a first wireless network **260**. The first wireless network **260** also includes an MSC **1010**, and a SHLR **240**.

[0063] A second wireless network **1070** is shown for completeness and perspective. The second wireless network **1070** includes an MSC **1020**, and services a wireless device **1090**.

[0064] The MAST **200** provides presence and/or location information regarding any or all subscriber's of the first wireless network to external entities, without the need to change current communication standards, e.g., utilizing otherwise conventional SS7 and IS-41 communication messages.

[0065] The MAST **200** includes information similar to that contained in the SHLR, e.g., relating to the presence and/or location of serviced wireless devices. However, in accordance with the principles of the present invention, the MAST **200** may include additional information, and/or logged information over time with respect to each individual subscriber. The MAST **200** may be implemented on a same type platform as that implementing the SHLR **240**, e.g., an SCP commercially available from LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES INC.

[0066] **FIG. 2A** shows a block diagram of the basic elements of an exemplary MAST system **200** shown in **FIG. 2**.

[0067] Importantly, the MAST **200** includes a TCP/IP interface **270** and internal module **201** allowing appropriate operational access to subscriber presence and/or location information maintained therein. Thus, any or all external application servers **290** (e.g., chat servers, law enforcement servers, etc.) may access subscriber presence and or location information regarding a wireless service provider's subscribers via the Internet **280**.

[0068] The subscriber's presence and/or location information maintained in a subscriber presence/location database **205** may be pre-configured for transmission to various pre-set application servers **290** via the TCP/IP (i.e., non-SS7 protocol) module **201** and associated link **270**. Alternatively, presence and/or location information regarding any or all subscriber's serviced by the MAST **200** may be provided to an application server **290** upon request by the application server **290**.

[0069] Referring back to **FIG. 2**, the particular applications which can be implemented by the various application servers **290** is virtually limitless. Any application which can make use of the presence and/or location information regarding any or all wireless subscribers (regardless of whether or not they are inside or external to a particular wireless network) may utilize the information contained in the database of the MAST **200** in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0070] The message flow shown in **FIG. 2** relates to that of a stand-alone HLR **240**. The message flow utilizing an integrated HLR is shown in **FIG. 3**. The message flow in **FIG. 2** is as follows.

[0071] A MOBILE REGISTRATION message (**1**.) is transmitted by a relevant wireless device **1090** through the host wireless network **#21070** to its MSC **1020**. That MSC

1020 sends a MOBILE REGISTRATION NOTIFICATION (REGNOT) message (2.) to an STP 1030, which forwards a REGNOT message (3.) to the SHLR 240. Up to this point the message flow is as in the conventional system shown in FIG. 10.

[0072] However, as shown in FIG. 2, the SHLR 240 implements a message referred to herein as a registration notification forwarding mechanism (4. in FIG. 2). The registration forwarding mechanism (4.) forwards a received REGNOT message (3.) back out to the STP 230 as a REGNOT message (5.), destined for the MAST 200.

[0073] The STP 230 forwards the REGNOT message (5.) from the SHLR to the MAST 200 using a REGNOT message (6.). Thus, the SHLR 240 shown in FIG. 2 is an otherwise conventional SHLR, but additionally includes the functions necessary to implement a registration notification forwarding mechanism to forward the REGNOT message (5.) to the MAST system 200 via the STP 230 using another forwarded REGNOT message (6.). With the architecture of the embodiment of FIG. 2, a service provider may need to upgrade software running on an associated SHLR 240, but need not upgrade their MSC 1010 or STP 230 from those otherwise conventionally available or already installed, providing significant cost savings and efficiency.

[0074] In response to the REGNOT message (6.) received from the STP 1030, the MAST 200 updates its database 205 appropriately. The information contained in the database 205 is then made available as appropriate over the TCP/IP link 270 to an external device, e.g., using an Intranet or the Internet 280, e.g., to all requesters, to only some requesters paying a particular fee for such a service, etc.

[0075] The service provider 250 is given operational and maintenance access to the MAST 200 similarly to conventional access given to an SHLR, e.g., using an X.25, RS-232 or TCP/IP link.

[0076] FIG. 3 is a detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system 200 corresponding to an integrated Home Location Register (I-HLR) including a registration notification forwarding mechanism integrated with a mobile switching center (MSC) on a common platform, utilizing message flows in conformance with SS7 standards and IS-41 standards, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0077] In particular, FIG. 3 shows that when using an I-HLR 340, the communications between the MSC/I-HLR common platform and the STP 330 are typically made over an SS7 link to the common platform, and that the elements on the common platform (e.g., the MSC 310 and the I-HLR 340) may communicate with one another in proprietary ways without the need to conform to SS7 or other external signaling requirements.

[0078] The I-HLR 340 shown in FIG. 3 is an otherwise conventional I-HLR, but additionally includes the functions necessary to implement a registration notification forwarding mechanism to forward the REGNOT message (5.) to the MAST system 200 via the STP 230 using another forwarded REGNOT message (6.). With the architecture of the embodiment of FIG. 3, a service provider may need to upgrade software running on an associated I-HLR 340, but need not upgrade their MSC 310 or STP 330 from those otherwise conventionally available or already installed.

[0079] FIG. 4 is a detailed architecture and information flow of an embodiment of a MAST system corresponding to a stand-alone Home Location Register (SHLR) including a Registration Notification copy function in a signaling transfer point (STP) and a TCP/IP connection (or SS7 connection) to the MAST application, particularly useful in wireless networks having HLRs which do not include a registration notification forwarding mechanism, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0080] In particular, FIG. 4 importantly shows an STP 430 including otherwise conventional functions, but in addition includes a REGNOT copy and forward function.

[0081] The REGNOT copy and forward function in the STP 430 copies the REGNOT message (2.) received from an MSC 1020, and forwards a REGNOT copy message (3*b*.) to the MAST 200. The STP 430 also sends the otherwise conventional REGNOT message (3.) to the SHLR 1040.

[0082] The STP 430 shown in FIG. 4 is an otherwise conventional STP, but additionally includes the functions necessary to implement a COPY and FORWARD message to generate a copy of the REGNOT message (3.) sent to the SHLR 1040 as a copy REGNOT message (3*b*.) sent to the MAST 200. With the architecture of the embodiment of FIG. 4, a service provider may need to upgrade software running on an associated STP 430, but need not upgrade their MSC(s) 1010 or SHLR(s) 1040 from those otherwise conventionally available or already installed.

[0083] The MAST system architecture shown in FIG. 4 has the advantage of eliminating some communications (e.g., the registration notification forwarding mechanism trigger (4.) and the REGNOT message (5.) shown in FIG. 3), which is particularly important because the registration notification forwarding mechanism trigger (4.) is an enhanced proprietary feature (i.e., not standard) to some HLRs.

[0084] The service may be provided in a provisionless mode, and all the necessary subscriber information may reside on the HLR. Thus, there is preferably no specific subscriber provisioning necessary on the MAST SPA. Rather, the subscriber data may be maintained at the relevant HLR. The amount of memory, e.g., random access memory (RAM) and the number of SS7 links required by the SCP platform implementing the MAST SPA may be determined based on the subscriber count to be supported.

[0085] For instance, as a general guideline, consider the following example. Assuming a load of 500,000 subscribers, one (1) registration notification forwarding mechanism trigger per subscriber per hour, five (5) Mobile Inactivity Triggers (MITs) per subscriber per day, 1 KB of memory per subscriber, and an average SS7 message length of 100 octects, the number of SS7 links required in the disclosed embodiment for this configuration is approximately four (4), along with approximately 500 MB of RAM.

[0086] Use of Signaling Transfer Points (STPs) between MSCs can be implemented in multiple I-HLR environments as well.

[0087] From the perspective of a wireless service provider, MAST allows the implementation of an endless array of services and/or applications that can utilize presence and/or location information regarding a wireless device. Specific

implementations of services will depend on the capabilities of the application servers that receive the information from the MAST. For instance, knowledge of registration activity in and of itself represents a huge benefit for the service provider from a marketing perspective because it can provide additional information regarding subscriber's habits, and general demographic data collection.

[0088] The MAST techniques and apparatus may also be used for law enforcement purposes. For instance, data relating to mobile station activity may be used, e.g., as evidence to build a legal case against an offender.

[0089] As another benefit, subscribers of a wireless service provider can be provided with an enhanced protection mechanism against fraud by allowing faster detection and/or tracking of delinquent mobile devices.

[0090] Depending upon particular parameters used, other services may be implemented. For instance, with knowledge of the location of a particular mobile station, a wireless service provider may implement an "Emergency Location" plan. Using such a service, mobile subscribers can have activity information (e.g., presence and/or location information, together with date and time) relating to the use of their mobile device transmitted to the MAST SPA in accordance with the principles of the present invention. The MAST SPA will log the presence and/or location information regarding relevant mobile subscribers served by the associated HRL, and pass the logged information on to any entity on the Internet or other entity or network, providing an accurate and up-to-date information source. Using the "Emergency Location" plan, the logged location information may be used by authorities to locate a person associated with that particular mobile device easier.

[0091] **FIG. 5A** is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters of a Mobile Registration Notification (REGNOT) message in conformance with SS7 and IS-41 standards utilized for determination of location information in a MAST system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention. **FIG. 5B** is a detailed depiction of all conventional parameters of a REGNOT message.

[0092] In particular, the REGNOT message parameters utilized by the MAST may be any or all parameters included or inferred from information within the standard REGNOT message shown in **FIG. 5B**. For instance, the cell site ID **502** and/or sector ID **504** of the cell servicing the relevant wireless device may be used to provide a location of the wireless device, and date and time of a communication may be used for presence information.

[0093] Other information such as power level **506** can be used to infer and further refine the location information. For instance, a lower power level received by the wireless device **1090** (and/or higher power output by the wireless device **1090**) may be used to infer a longer distance from the relevant cell site receiving transmissions from the wireless device **1090**. Conversely, a higher power level might infer that the wireless device **1090** is closer to the cell site. Thus, a sort of 'poor man's GPS' can be provided to external entities regarding the location of a subscriber's wireless device.

[0094] **FIG. 6** is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters of a Mobile Subscriber Inactive message in conformance with SS7 and IS-41 standards utilized for determination of inactive presence information in a MAST system, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0095] In particular, a MOBILE SUBSCRIBER INACTIVE message follows the same paths as does the REGNOT messages shown in **Figs.2, 3** and **4**. While the REGNOT message indicates an active wireless device, the receipt of a MOBILE SUBSRIBER INACTIVE message with respect to a particular subscriber may be logged in the database **205** of the MAST **200** as presence information, i.e., that the wireless device may no longer be present.

[0096] **FIG. 7A** is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters such as location in an exemplary Internet Protocol (IP) message sent from the MAST system to an application server (e.g., a Chat Server) via the Internet, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0097] The particular information contained either in the database **205** of the MAST and/or which is transmitted over the TCP/IP connection **270** and the Internet **280** may depend upon the particular applications operating on any of the application servers **290**. Rudimentary information may include, e.g., an IP address of the application server **290**, an ID of the relevant mobile wireless device, presence information such as a date and time of activity, and location information either real or inferred. Real information may include the cell site ID and/or sector ID. Inferred or extrapolated information may include, e.g., a delta distance corresponding to a power level of the wireless device's transmitter during a last contact.

[0098] **FIG. 7B** is a simplified depiction of relevant parameters in another exemplary IP message such as a log of past presence and location information for a particular wireless device sent from the MAST system to an application server (e.g., a law enforcement authority) via the Internet, in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

[0099] For instance, as shown in **FIG. 7B**, presence and/or location information may be logged into a historical file for each subscriber/wireless device. A particular mobile ID together with a series of database entries corresponding to different REGNOT commands and/or MOBILE SUBSCRIBER INACTIVE messages received by the MAST can be provided to one or more particular application servers desiring such information.

[0100] Alternatively, the presence and/or location information transmitted to a desiring application server **190** may relate to a group of subscribers having a common attribute (e.g., most active subscribers, least active subscribers, subscribers living in a particular region, etc.).

[0101] As disclosed, activity status information is tracked by the MAST as follows. Initially, the MAST receives a Mobile Registration message via a registration notification forwarding mechanism, alternatively referred to as a Registration Forward Message, from the relevant MSC/HLR (I-HLR or S-HLR), and appropriately updates the activity status in the database. Upon power down of the relevant wireless device, the MAST will receive a Mobile De-Registration message via a Mobile Inactive Trigger (MIT) from the relevant MSC/HLR, and appropriately updates the activity status in the database.

[0102] When a new message (e.g., a mobile registration message or mobile de-registration message) is received, the

MAST application preferably parses the message, e.g., into up to 10 parameters, and stores the parsed message portions in an appropriate MSID ordered table.

[0103] **FIG. 8** shows an exemplary Mobile Station Identity (MSID) ordered table is shown in **FIG. 8**.

[0104] **FIG. 9** shows an exemplary process by which the parsed message portions are processed.

[0105] In particular, as shown in step **202** of **FIG. 9**, the process determines if a new REGNOT or MSINACT has been received.

[0106] If a record for the same MSID is found in the table of **FIG. 8**, in step **204** a comparison of the status and key parameters within the two records will be made.

[0107] In step **208**, if the status (ACT to DEACT or DEACT TO ACT) or one of the key parameters are different from that of the previous record, a subset of key parameters up to and including all key parameters from this new record will be sent to at least one, but possibly multiple IP addresses on a network.

[0108] In steps **206** and **210**, the old record is replaced in the MSID table with the new, most recent record.

[0109] The MAST receives information directly from the HLR or the STP (e.g., I-HLR or S-HLR), which has previously validated the MSID and determined the need to forward the information to the MAST.

[0110] Administration of the MAST may include, e.g., configuration and maintenance of the following:

[0111] Point-codes and Subsystem numbers of the I-HLRs that will send information to the MAST SPA.

[0112] Parameters that the I-HLR will forward to the MAST SPA in the registration notification forwarding mechanism and MIT messages.

[0113] Parameters that the MAST SPA will forward to the application servers.

[0114] Destination IP addresses and Port numbers of the application servers.

[0115] Expiration time for records that have not experienced changes over a configurable period of time.

[0116] Size of the rotating log file.

[0117] There is preferably only one record per MSID in the MAST. The relevant service provider is preferably given access to the database stored in the MAST, e.g., through the conventional operational maintenance processor (OMP).

[0118] Due to its nature, the content of this database is likely to change rapidly over time, therefore the MAST database may provide only a snapshot of the activity status of all the relevant wireless devices at any given time.

[0119] The MAST preferably keeps a temporary log of the messages sent to the application services in a rotating file. This rotating file may have a configurably fixed size, and may overwrite itself with more recent information, e.g., after a desired period of time determined by the level of message traffic. This log provides a historical representation of the activity of specific wireless devices, or groups of wireless devices.

[0120] Reports may be generated for the relevant service provider, e.g., through the OMP or via a TCP/IP connection to the Internet. Possible reports can include, e.g., various information depending upon the parameters that the relevant HLR sends to the MAST, and/or specific needs and selections made by the particular service provider.

[0121] In case the subscriber base increases, the platform can be easily scaled to increase capacity.

[0122] Being a Wireless Intelligent Network service, MAST takes advantage of the improved reliability, scalability and performance of the Advantage Platform and the flexibility of the intelligent network approach.

[0123] Additionally, MAST is an Intelligent Network application that can be executed simultaneously on a single SCP platform, such as a Short Message Service Center, Over The Air Activation, PrePaid Wireless, etc. This fact spreads the cost of the platform over several services, thus allowing the service provider to price them in a competitive way. From an operating standpoint, a single platform is easier to manage resulting in reduced maintenance costs.

Mobile Chat Location Register (MCLR)

[0124] The principles of the present invention may be used to implement a wireless chat tracking system (i.e., Mobile Chat Location Register (MCLR)) which utilizes a change in mobile registration status to automatically notify a chat group system outside the wireless network of current status information activity regarding a relevant device, e.g., registration activity or inactivity timeout.

[0125] In a disclosed embodiment, a registration notification (REGNOT) message is either explicitly forwarded or copied to an external IP based application (e.g., to a mobile chat group system). The change in mobile registration is communicated via a suitable signaling link (e.g., SS7, TCP/IP, etc.) between a Home Location Register (HLR) and the chat group system. Therefore, instead of a conventionally closed system using SS7 messages, REGNOT messages are pushed out over TCP/IP connections to external applications (e.g., chat servers) to automatically notify the external system of the location of a particular user.

[0126] In accordance with the principles of the present invention, a REGNOT message may be simply forwarded in accordance with instructions from an HLR, or all REGNOT messages received may be copied and forwarded to an external application, which then sifts through the copied and received REGNOT messages for messages of relevance to that particular external application.

[0127] **FIG. 12** shows an exemplary service implementation showing wireless chat status tracking providing an automatic on-line or off-line notification in a chat scenario using techniques and apparatus in accordance with the principles of the present invention. **FIG. 13** shows a more detailed block diagram of the SMSC **1230** shown in **FIG. 12**, including a REGNOT message receiver **1304**, a REGNOT forwarder **1302**, and an optional REGNOT copier **1306**.

[0128] For the purposes of illustration, assume that in **FIGS. 12 and 13** all chat subscribers with the exception of Mobile A are already participating in a chat session called, e.g., "Buddies".

Scenario 1

Automatic On-Line Notification Chat Scenario in a Prepaid Environment

[0129] (1) The handset Mobile A **1202**, provisioned with chat service, is powered on or performs the IS-41 periodic or forced registration process. Thus, a Registration access message is sent from the Mobile A **1202** to the Mobile Switching Center (MSC) **1204**.

[0130] (2) The MSC **1204** sends the IS-41 Registration Notification (REGNOT) message to the Home Location Register (HLR) **1206**.

[0131] (3) Following the authentication process of Mobile A **1202**, in accordance with the principles of the present invention, the HLR **1206** forwards the REGNOT message to, e.g., a relevant prepaid application server. This may be performed using an IS-41 REGNOT message over an SS7 network or an equivalent registration message over a TCP/IP network.

[0132] (4) The SMSC/Prepaid service **1230** may notify a suitable wireless Internet gateway **1210** that Mobile A **1202** is "on-line". Such a suitable wireless Internet gateway **1210** is shown and described in co-pending U.S. appl. Ser. No. 09/630,762, entitled "Wireless Internet Gateway" to Smith, filed Aug. 2, 2000.

[0133] If Mobile A **1202** is a prepaid subscriber, the prepaid service may verify an account balance for Mobile A **1202** at this point and can decide to continue service or not.

[0134] (5) The wireless Internet gateway **1210** forwards the REGNOT message to a relevant external chat server **1220** automatically indicating to that external application that Mobile A **1202** is "on-line".

[0135] (6) The external chat server **1220** determines that Mobile A **1202** belongs to a particular chat group, e.g., the chat group "Buddies" of the current example, and automatically registers Mobile A **1202** in the chat session.

[0136] (7) The external chat server **1220** notifies the other chat participants (e.g., the "Buddies" participants) that Mobile A **1202** is available by sending a broadcast text message to all current participants of that chat session. At the same time, the chat server **1220** may also notify Mobile A **1202** of all current participants of that chat session.

[0137] (8) The wireless Internet gateway **1210** automatically forwards chat messages from the chat server **1220** for delivery to the chat session participants via the relevant SMSC **1230**.

[0138] (9) The short message service center (SMSC) **1230** requests the HLR **1206** for short message delivery to all participating mobile subscribers.

[0139] (10) The HLR **1206** provides the SMSC **1230** with all needed information to deliver the short messages.

[0140] (11) The SMSC **1230** stores and forwards the broadcast message to the MSC **1204** for delivery to the other chat participants (e.g., to Mobile B **1242** and Mobile C **1252**), and the list of chat participants message to the automatically entering Mobile A **1202**.

[0141] (12) The MSC **1204** delivers the chat messages to all participating mobiles **1202**, **1242**, **1252**.

Scenario 2

Automatic Off-Line Notification Chat Scenario in a Prepaid Environment

[0142] (1) The handset Mobile A **1202**, provisioned with chat service, is powered off or has moved out of the relevant coverage area.

[0143] (2) The MSC **1204** detects an expiration of an inactivity timer and sends an IS-41 Inactivity message to the Home Location Register (HLR) **1206**.

[0144] (3) The HLR **1206** forwards the Inactivity message, e.g., the IS-41 MS Inactivity message, over an SS7 network, or an equivalent inactivity message over a TCP/IP network to, e.g., a relevant prepaid application server such as the SMSC/Prepaid platform **1230**.

[0145] (4) The SMSC/Prepaid service **1230** notifies the wireless Internet gateway **1210** that Mobile A **1202** is "off-line".

[0146] (5) The wireless Internet gateway **1210** forwards the message to the chat server **1220** that Mobile A **1202** is "off-line".

[0147] (6) The external chat server **1220** determines that Mobile A **1202** belongs to, e.g., the chat group "Buddies", and thus removes Mobile A **1202** from the chat session.

[0148] (7) The external chat server **1220** notifies the chat session participants, e.g., participants of the chat session "Buddies", that Mobile A **1202** has become unavailable, by sending a broadcast text message to all current chat participants.

[0149] (8) The wireless Internet gateway **1210** forwards the messages for delivery.

[0150] (9) The SMSC **1230** requests the HLR **1206** for short message delivery to all mobile subscribers.

[0151] (10) The HLR **1206** provides the SMSC **1230** with all needed information to deliver the messages.

[0152] (11) The SMSC **1230** stores and forwards the broadcast message for delivery to Mobile wireless devices B & C, **1242** & **1252**.

[0153] The MSC **1204** delivers the messages to Mobile wireless devices B & C, **1242** & **1252**.

[0154] Note that while the chat server **1220** shown in **FIG. 12** is internal to the service provider's network, the principles of the present invention relate equally to placement of the chat server **1220** external to the service provider's network, i.e., over the Internet **1299**.

[0155] This solution may be integrated with existing, commercially available SMSC & web gateway products that enable wireless carriers & Internet service providers (ISPs) to offer, e.g., a pre-payment billing option for enhanced messaging services.

[0156] The principles of the present invention have applicability for usage with wireless intelligent network (WIN) applications, e.g., those already otherwise containing SMSC, prepaid, and/or web gateway applications. Moreover, there is applicability for usage with mobile registra-

tion, for inactivity message forwarding to a chat server, or for mobile automatic notification of subscriber status to chat server.

[0157] While the invention has been described with reference to the exemplary embodiments thereof, those skilled in the art will be able to make various modifications to the described embodiments of the invention without departing from the true spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a message handler comprising:

a registration notification message receiver; and

a registration notification message forwarder to forward a registration notification message received by a mobile switching center over an Internet connection.

2. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 1, wherein:

said internet connection utilizes a TCP/IP protocol.

3. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 1, wherein:

said registration notification message forwarder copies all registration notification messages received by said mobile switching center.

4. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 1, further comprising:

a wireless Internet gateway to transmit said forwarded notification message over said Internet connection.

5. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 4, wherein:

said registration notification message handler communicates with said wireless Internet gateway using a Signaling System #7 communications protocol.

6. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 1, wherein:

said registration notification message is previously forwarded by a Home Location Register (HLR).

7. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a message handler comprising:

an MSInactivity message receiver; and

an MSInactivity message forwarder to forward an MSInactivity message received by a mobile switching center over an Internet connection.

8. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 7, wherein:

said internet connection utilizes a TCP/IP protocol.

9. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 7, wherein:

said MSInactivity message forwarder copies all MSInactivity messages received by said mobile switching center.

10. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 7, further comprising:

a wireless Internet gateway to transmit said forwarded MSInactivity message over said Internet connection.

11. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 10, wherein:

said MSInactivity message handler communicates with said wireless Internet gateway using a Signaling System #7 communications protocol.

12. In a short message service center, a module for permitting automatic status tracking of a wireless chat participant by an application external to a service provider including said short message service center, a handler according to claim 7, wherein:

said MSInactivity message is previously forwarded by a Home Location Register (HLR).

13. A method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant, comprising:

receiving an IS-41 conforming registration notification message from a mobile switching center; and

automatically forwarding said IS-41 conforming registration notification message over an Internet connection to an external chat server.

14. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, wherein:

said registration notification message is a REGNOT message.

15. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, wherein:

said Internet connection utilizes a TCP/IP protocol.

16. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, wherein:

said registration notification message is additionally forwarded by an SMSC.

17. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, further comprising:

automatically adding a user corresponding to said automatically forwarded registration notification message to a chat session.

18. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 17, further comprising:

automatically notifying other chat participants regarding a presence of the automatically added user.

19. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 17, further comprising:

automatically sending a list of chat participants to said user.

20. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, wherein:

said registration notification message is signaling system #7 and IS-41 compliant.

21. The method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 13, wherein:

said registration notification message is IS-41 compliant.

22. Apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant, comprising:

means for receiving an IS-41 conforming registration notification message from a mobile switching center; and

means for automatically forwarding said IS-41 conforming registration notification message over an Internet connection to an external chat server.

23. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, wherein:

said registration notification message is a REGNOT message.

24. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, wherein:

said Internet connection utilizes a TCP/IP protocol.

25. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, further comprising:

means for forwarding said registration notification message by an SMSC to said means for automatically forwarding.

26. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, further comprising:

means for automatically adding a user corresponding to said automatically forwarded registration notification message to a chat session.

27. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 26, further comprising:

means for automatically notifying other chat participants regarding a presence of the automatically added user.

28. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 26, further comprising:

means for automatically sending a list of chat participants to said user.

29. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, wherein:

said registration notification message is signaling system #7 and IS-41 compliant.

30. The apparatus for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant according to claim 22, wherein:

said registration notification message is IS-41 compliant.

31. A method for automatically notifying an external chat server of a presence of a chat session participant, comprising:

receiving an IS-41 conforming MSInactivity notification message from a mobile switching center; and

automatically forwarding said IS-41 conforming MSInactivity message over an Internet connection to an external chat server.

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